4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

*175 to prevent, as far as it lay in his power, any re-enactment of
*643 former scenes of sanguinary violence. It was proposed that
*648 Captain Mahoney, the former Resident, should return, take
158 charge, if necessary, of the administration of affairs, and settle the question of the succession in case of the decease of the Rájah. Mr. Cole himself offered to proceed in person to Mercara. When Dr. Ingledew arrived, the end of Vírarája was at hand. It does not appear from the records, that Dr. Ingledew had an interview, or, if he had, that he was recognized by the dying Rájah. During his last days he seems to have been more favorably inclined, than formerly, towards the Sóde Rájah, who was appointed to transact business for him, and whom he desired, it was said, to act as Devan during the minority of Dévammáji. On the 9th June 1809 the unhappy prince called his beloved daughter to his bedside, gave his seal into her hands, and shortly afterwards breathed his last. He lies buried in one of the Mausoleums, which grace the hill overlooking the town of Mercara.

*175 A sad spectacle! A noble vessel, after having gallantly
*643 weathered the storms of Mussulman domination and conquest, is torn from its moorings by the swell of wild grief and passion, and drifts into the breakers of sanguinary phrensy and suicidal despair, to perish there a miserable wreck, with many to look on, but none to help!

*175 And how awfully has the Righteous Ruler of the whole
*643 earth executed judgment upon the guilty prince and the ob-
644 jects of his love and hope! The forlorn Rájah lived ages of anguish from the day of the death of his beloved wife, 17th May 1807, to the date of his own decease, 9th June 1809. His idolized daughter was married and had four children, two sons and two daughters. She was deprived of the throne and of her father's legacy, and lived in obscurity. Before the end of 1833 her husband was murdered in the palace, she herself carried a prisoner to Mercara, her property seized by her

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

cousin, the late Rájah, (one lac of pagodas at one sweep,) and shortly after she herself was murdered at Mercara, and her three children (one boy appears to have died a natural death), at Nalknád, by orders of her relative, and their corpses thrown into pits.

B. LINGARÁJENDRA.

1809—1820.

1. Lingarájendra's Intrigues.

Dr. Ingledew, on the sudden death of Vírarája, had to fulfil the duties of a British Agent quite ex-improviso. He acted, it is true, with considerable tact and prudence and with perfect honesty; but he was not equal to the deep play of the Coorg parties, and was not sharp sighted enough to discern the principal mover in the scenes acted before him. Thus he failed in the task, devolved upon him by a most unforeseen combination of circumstances and persons upon a ground he had scarcely explored. He ought to have carried out the wishes of the late Rájah, as far as they had received the approbation and sanction of the British Government. But it happened otherwise.

When Vírarájendra died, there seemed to be a good prospect of peace and prosperity for Coorg. A short time before his decease, Vírarája permitted the Sóde Rájah to act for him as principal Devan, and expressed a desire, that his son-in-law should have the regency of Coorg, during the minority of Dévammáji, in conjunction with an Agent of the East India Company to be appointed by the Governor General. He had once given to Dr. Ingledew a testamentary document, expressive of these wishes, but had afterwards recalled and never returned it. As soon as the Rájah had expired, his daughter Dévammáji was acknowledged as Ráni of Coorg, by the assembled chiefs. The Sóde Rájah continued to perform the

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

had some ambition to shine as a poet. Some of his pieces, addressed to one of his wives, are still preserved. They have no merit, and were perhaps made for him. However, he may have been a Nero in a small way. Cruelty seems to have been his sport. He liked to kill his victims with his own hand, with gun, bow or knife. For small offences people had their ears cropped, their noses cut, or their tongues clipped. For an impertinent answer men or women had their mouths rinsed, that was the phrase, i. e. their lips were cut off all round their mouths, and they were left to perish without food or drink. Others were thrown down a precipice on the hill side, near the "Rájah's seat" in Mercara. Many seem to have been destroyed merely for the purpose of confiscating their property, for Lingarája had as great a passion for gold as for blood.

During the first years of his reign he was restrained from giving full vent to his atrocious propensities by the influence of his Devan, Kshauryakere Appanna, who seems to have been a man of character and independence, bold enough to lecture the tyrant whom he had placed on the throne in preference to the rule of a stranger, the Rájah of Sóde. But by degrees Lingarája became impatient of the control of a subject. Appanna, relying on the Rájah's gratitude, continued to exhort, to warn and, at times, to resist his master. He had mistaken his man. One day the Devan was seized and carried before the Rájah. He was charged with treason. He knew, that he was doomed. The Rájah himself conducted the investigation. "Confess your guilt," he cried. "I am guilty indeed," replied the intrepid minister, "of one crime, of having made a wretch like you, Rájah of Coorg." Lingarája was mad with rage. Appanna, with several other so called accomplices, was carried out into the jungle to a distance of some miles. There they were nailed to some large trees, the Rájah feasting his eyes on the torments of his help-

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

less victims, who died with curses on their lips. A large number of people, the families, relations and friends of the condemned men, were slaughtered on the occasion. Some say, that the Devan had entered into a conspiracy against the Rájah's life, and that on a hunting excursion a shot, aimed at Lingarája, passed close by him, whereupon he seized the traitors and exterminated them and their party; but this may only be an invention of the Rájah, calculated to throw a veil over a crime of a dye too dark even for Coorg. In 1820 the miserable tyrant died. He believed that he was destroyed through magic arts and demoniac influences employed by secret enemies. He had held possession of Coorg for eleven long years. The complete ignorance of his subjects, whom he managed to isolate entirely from the surrounding countries, subject to the East India Company, combined with the terror of his arm, kept up by frequent executions, and a system of treacherous espionage, fostered by the Rájah among his terrified slaves, laid the Coorgs prostrate at the feet of their rapacious and blood-thirsty master. He died forty-five years of age amidst the gloom of dread superstitions. His queen, who preferred death to the fate which, she thought, awaited her from the hatred of the young Rájah, swallowed diamond powder, and was buried with Lingarája in a splendid sepulchre near the tomb of Vírarájendra.

3. Lingarája's character.

Of Lingarája's personal character, Lieut. Connor who made his acquaintance gives us the following graphic picture:—

"The late Chief, anxious to prevent his brothers from acquiring any influence, retained them in a species of exile; Appáji Sáib, the elder, is represented as having been of a violent temper and impatient of control; this turbulent spirit hurried him to a premature end, and Lingarája had nearly shared the same fate, but seems to have owed his safety to

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

of system, however, he was most reluctant, and when Mr. Casamajor pressed the point, he turned round and asserted, that he would do as he pleased, Coorg was an independent country, etc. Mr. Casamajor replied, that Coorg had been subject to Tippu, and was now subject to the Company, as was proved by the annual tribute of an elephant, in lieu of the former payment of Rs. 24,000. When the Resident requested the Rájah, to treat Dévammáji and the other members of his family kindly, he answered, that he required no such admonitions; but as for Dévammáji and her family, they were all dead, long since. This was the most barefaced lie. Dévammáji indeed, and her sister Mahádévammáji had been murdered, probably before the end of 1832, a month or two before Mr. Casamajor's visit, but her three children were still alive, and were murdered at Nalkanád, when the British troops crossed the frontiers of Coorg.

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4. Assassination of the Rájah's family.

The end of the two daughters of Dodda-Vírarájender was most miserable and surpasses in horror all the other abominations of this monster tyrant. Shortly after the flight of Channa Basava and his wife, Dévammáji, her sister Mahádévammáji and their children, were taken by the Rájah's orders and by his sepoys to the Appagalla Panya, one of the private farms belonging to the Rájah, about four miles distant from Mercara. After some days, the Devan Basava and an eunuch, named Mandaya, a Jemadar of the palace, came there one morning early, conveyed Dévammáji and her sister Mahádévammáji, to the fort at Mercara, and confined them in the store-room in rear of the palace, placing a strong guard over them. The same morning, before noon, the Devan with the same eunuch came to the store-room, and in presence of some of the guard, compelled the prisoners to put their hands into boiling ghee. They left them shut up till about 2 o'clock P. M.,

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4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

when the Devan and the eunuch came again, and ordered one of the Jemadars on guard to bring two ropes. When brought, the Devan himself adjusted them round Dévammáji's neck, who made great resistance and implored to be taken before the Rájah, whilst the Jemadar and some of the guards held her hands, and pulled at the rope, which was thrown over a beam in the roof. In this manner both sisters then and there were put to death. As soon as life was extinct, they were taken down, wrapped up in matting and placed just outside the store-room beneath a small plantation of sugarcane. In the meantime orders had been sent by the Devan to the guard of Válekárs, Pariahs, at the Kumblagiri barrier, about a mile from the fort, to dig a hole for two bodies in a secluded part of the jungle, and for some of the said guard, to be in attendance in the evening at the Sallyport, (a secret passage, leading under the ramparts) by 7 P. M. Several of them attended and, with the help of some of the men from the store-room-guard, conveyed the two bodies to the hole already prepared; the Devan accompanying the party and witnessing the interment.

Perhaps Dévammáji had revealed the place, where she had deposited her wealth, on a promise that her life would be spared, and therefore, in her anguish, desired to be brought before the Rájah. Certain it is, that the Rájah learned from her the exact spot, where her jewels had been immured; for he despatched a Munshi of his, a Yedavanád man, of the name of Kálingaya, in company with the Devan Basava to Dévammáji's house, some time after her removal from it, and instructed the Devan to break the wall of the room adjoining Dévammáji's bedroom, a little above the floor, where he would find the treasure. "On our digging," Kálingaya says, "a brass vessel of a size holding one and an half seer of water, with the mouth properly closed, was discovered. It could have been lifted with one hand. We did not open the mouth of

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AW5 Coorg AW5

the vessel, but brought it to Mercara, and the Devan Basava delivered it to the Rájah. It was not opened in my presence. I am not aware, what description of coins or jewelry or precious stones it contained. The vessel was not full, as on taking it up in the hands the contents were shaking about." Dévammáji probably had given her treasure to the Rájah as a ransom for her life; but by this very surrender of her wealth she sealed her doom. Dévammáji is described as a person of a commanding figure, fair complexion and round face. Her sister Mahádévammáji was short and slender, but also fair. Thus ended two daughters of Dodda-Vírarájendra and of his beloved Ráni.

The grand-children of Dodda-Vírarája and the remaining members of Appáji's and Lingarája's families, the nearest relatives of the Rájah, were carried to Nalkanád palace, when he himself retired to that secluded spot, in March 1834. Their removal to Nalkanád boded no good. They were kept in a couple of garden houses, under strict watch. General Fraser states:—

"One day subsequent to our troops entering the country, orders were given in the morning by the Devan, to dig a pit for a dozen persons, and in the dusk of the evening five women were put into one house and seven children into another, and the Kaplas (a jungle-tribe residing in the Nalkanád forest) and some of the Yedavanád men (Kunta Basava's especial followers), who had assisted in the murder of Dévammáji and Mahádévammáji, were sent into both houses with ropes, and then and there strangled every one of them, and afterwards tied them up in mats, the Devan Basavappa standing outside and accompanying the party, when the bodies were interred. The Rájah, also on this occasion, was close by the scene of murder, though not present. On the following morning, when walking with the Devan in front of the Nalkanád palace, on observing the Kaplas, he said to the Devan, that as they, the

4: Richter M, G-5 (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

*175 *643 *644 Kaplas, had executed the murders, they had better be put to death also. But the Devan interceded for them. They are old servants, he said, who have come from a foreign country (the Malayalam). He suggested, that they might be sent out of the country, and a present given to them, which was done accordingly. But instead of quitting the country, they proceeded with their families some miles distance into the jungle, where they remained about a month; and when all was quiet, they returned to Nalkanád."

This account shows that, sometimes at least, the Devan was more humane than his master.

*175 *643 *648 ***5. The war and the Rájah's surrender.***

The personal conference of Mr. Casamajor with the Rájah in the beginning of 1833 having proved fruitless, the Resident returned to Mysore. The accounts from Coorg continued as bad as ever. The Rájah harboured rebels, intrigued with Mysore and scarcely cared for appearances. Mr. Casamajor recommended the quartering of a native Regiment in the neighbourhood of Mercara, to keep the Rájah in check and to protect his subjects, but the Government were still loath to go to extremities. Since the Rájah had taken a personal dislike to Mr. Casamajor, Mr. Graeme, the Resident at Nagpore, then residing for the benefit of his health at Bangalore, was requested to proceed to Coorg and charged to make a last attempt at an amicable settlement. However, the Rájah was unwilling again to meet an English representative, seized and kept in durance two native envoys of Mr. Graeme viz. Daraset, a Parsee merchant of Tellicherry and Kulputty Karnikára Manoon, a Sheristadar of the Collector of Malabar, who had gone to Coorg furnished with passports from Mr. Graeme. The former the Rájah allowed to return to Tellicherry, but the latter he refused to set at liberty until the Rájah's relatives were given up to him by the Government. Having an extraordinary

4: Richter M, G-Ś (ca. 1856-1870) 1870 AWS Coorg AWS

ance of which Government allowed Rs. 2000 per annum. But the Coorg Headmen exposed his designs so cleverly in an official report to Government, that it is quite refreshing to read their clear and telling arguments, which evince a most loyal disposition to the new Sircar. They plainly state it as their private opinion, "that Channa Basava is obnoxious to the Coorgs and that if he be aggrandized in any respect, a discontent will be created in the country." Thus he remained in his obscure position as a farmer at Appagalla. He died on the 3rd August 1868 at his farm. His widow, Dévammáji and his only son Sómashékarappa, are the only surviving legitimate relations remaining in the province. Two daughters are married to Polygars in Mysore.

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Of the other members of the Rájahs' family, two relics of Tippu Sultan, *Dévammáji* and *Nílammáji*, cousins of Dodda-Vírajender, had the palace at Nálkanád assigned for their residence without, however, any claim or title to the property. Dévammáji died there before 1852 and was buried in the garden behind the Palace. Nílammáji followed her in 1865 and was buried by her side according to Mussulman rites.

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There were three more distant female relations residing at the palace at Haléri, of whom Rájammáji, the widow of Vírappa, died on the 26th September 1868 and Lingavva, the widow of Nanjundappa, brother of Vírappa, and both sons of Appáji Arasu, younger brother of Dodda-Vírájender, on the 8th May 1869.

4. ABHRAMBARA, THE IMPOSTOR.

These two brothers, Vírappa and Nanjundappa, together with fourteen others of their relations were apprehended by order of the Ex-Rájah, immediately after his father's death in 1820, and confined in a building in the Fort of Mercara, called the Kótemane, where the whole of them died of starvation and misery within three months after their imprison-

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